

JUNE 21, 2005 SAVANNA, IL –WORKSHOP, HOUSE OF EVENTS

Table 1

(Due to computer problems, these recommendations were typed out after the meeting, using notes written on the yellow handout sheet and comments made by the spokesperson during the presentation to the group.)

3.7 Commercial Fishing and Clamming --- no action needed

4.2 Waterfowl Hunting Closed Areas ---- no change needed

4.3 Waterfowl Hunting Regulations --- no change needed

4.5 Permanent Waterfowl Hunting Blinds in Pools 12, 13, 14 ----no change needed. One dissenting vote at this table; wants to eliminate permanent blinds.

4.6 Potter's Marsh Managed Hunt, Pool 13 ---- no change needed One dissenting vote at this table; wants to eliminate permanent blinds.

4.7 Blanding Landing Managed Hunt --- no change needed

4.9 Fishing Tournaments --- no action needed

Spokesperson indicated Federal involvement was not necessary; states were doing fine.

Savanna Workshop

June 05/21/2005

Table 2

Issue 3.7 Commercial Fishing/musseling

No issue with commercial fishing as proposed in alternative D.

Issue 5.2 Abolish the electric motor areas and instead make them no-wake zones because this may be a safety issue in inclement weather.

Issue 4.2 waterfowl closed areas

No additional closed areas.

Keep the current regulations concerning access in the closed areas. Just do a better job of signing the areas.

Issue 4.3

25 shot shells would like to see evidence from other areas where the limit already exists, and we would not be opposed to the 25 shell limit.

100 yard spacing – not far enough apart. Instead, a 200 yard limit is better.

4.5 permanent blinds - No consensus, but most of the group would like to get rid of the blinds. If we keep them, then enforce the builder having to clean them up.

4.6 Potters marsh managed hunt

The group has no problems with the alternative d changes to the potters marsh.

The group has no problems with the alternative d changes for Blanding Landing.

4.9 fishing tournaments

Too many! Eliminate tournaments on holiday weekends. Safety, ie tournament fishermen travel too fast.

5.1 Beach uses

Do not like the proposal of camping allowed only adjacent the main channel because of safety ie, kids have to swim in the current, families have to camp along with all the drunks.

No consensus, but most people have no problem with the toilet provision.

Intoxication – no problem putting a “number” “.08 was suggested”, on people operating a boat, but not on just being on the refuge ie on your houseboat, or on a beach, or the passengers on boats.

Beach closures for public safety or wildlife needs – no consensus, needs more work

Explore user fees – no fees.

No wake zone – seems to make sense to the group. But they do not like the 5 MPH.

Spring lake speed limit – needs a speed limit, but need more info to determine what the limit will be.

Public use facilities – no problem with charging a fee. Maybe explore having the Corps annual pass cover Refuge access areas. Mimic the Corps fee amounts.

Table 3

3.7 The issue is Federal involvement in permitting for commercial fishing. Let the states keep the responsibility for permitting, they do a good job.

4.2 If someone lives in closed areas from October 1st to the end of hunting season, how do they access their cabin?

4.3 Eliminate 25 shell limit. You cannot shoot the amount of bird species that are available. There will be more cripples and potential charges for waste of game animals. 100 yd. spacing requirement is too small and is still hazardous recommend increase to 200. Eliminate firing lines.

4.5 Permanent blinds are a part of the history of the river, don't remove them. They should be completely bio degradable and made out of wood. First come first serve is more of an issue at the beginning of the season. This is a problem in Illinois due to much more metropolitan areas coming to hunts.

4.6 Leave the Potter's Marsh hunt the same, don't change it. Still allow permanent blinds.

4.7 Eliminate the managed hunt. Still allow permanent blinds.

4.9 Do not get involved with fishing tournament until the problems are identified and specify regulations are explained. The group does not feel there are any problems that warrant any change. Leave things the way they are.

5.1 No one liked anything, largely because nothing is understood.

Everyone had negative issues with camping, alcohol use, human waste, and permit for recreational use permit. If a permit is used, the Service MUST maintain and enhance the beach used areas. Everyone wants Alternative A because no resolution on the issues was reached.

5.2 Don't have electric motor areas.

5.3 No wake zones within 150 ft. of all boat ramps.

5.4 What fees are collected must stay within the upper miss district that it is collected within. Fee must be reasonable.

Other issues such as land purchases and dredging were not allowed time to discuss but were brought up. These should be given time at the workshops, and are not.

TABLE 4

ISSUE 1. BEACH ISSUES

NO NEED TO RESTRICT CAMPING TO MAIN CHANNEL (MAJORITY)
HUMAN WASTE REQUIREMENT IS NOT NEEDED
NO FEES FOR CAMPING (MAJORITY)
FEES ARE NEEDED TO HELP MAINTAIN BEACHES (MINORITY)
NEED TO CREATE MORE BEACHES ON MAIN CHANNEL & BACKWATERS
ENFORCE BEACH REGULATIONS FOR TRASH

ISSUE 2. ELECTRIC MOTOR AREAS

MAKE THE AREAS “NO WAKE” INSTEAD OF ELECTRIC MOTOR
NEED MORE “NO WAKE” AREAS AND POST THEM

ISSUE 3. HUNTING

25 SHOT SHELL RESTRICTION IS NOT NEEDED
100 YARD SPACING IS NOT ADEQUATE, 200 YARD MINIMUM
PERMANENT BLINDS SHOULD NOT BE ELIMINATED
POTTERS MARSH HUNT – GO TO ONE DAY DRAW
CLOSED AREAS – ARE MORE REFUGES GOING TO CREATE MORE PROBLEMS WITH
OVERPOPULATION WITH CANADA GEESE?
REDUCE THE POTTERS MARSH CLOSED AREA TO 200 YARDS

ISSUE 4. COMMERCIAL FISHING

THERE SHOULD BE LIMITS ON COMMERCIAL FISHING (MINORITY)
COMMERCIAL FISHING IS NEEDED TO REMOVE ROUGH FISH (MAJORITY)

ISSUE 5. WATER QUALITY

PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE RUNOFF NEEDS CORRECTIVE ACTIONS
SILTATION IS INCREASING; WING DAMS SHOULD BE REMOVED TO WITHIN 50-100 FEET FROM
SHORELINE, TO RESTORE BACKWATERS
DAM BELOW SABULA NEEDS TO BE REMOVED
ISLANDS SHOULD BE RIPRAPPED (MINORITY)
URBAN RUNOFF (INCLUDING SEWAGE), INDUSTRY, BARGE TRAFFIC, AND RECREATION TRAFFIC
SHOULD ALL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

ISSUE 6. WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT

WATER LEVEL SHOULD BE RAISED INSTEAD OF DRAWN DOWN

ISSUE 7. FISHING TOURNAMENTS

IMPORTANT TO ECONOMY AND SHOULD NOT BE REGULATED
INCREASE NUMBER OF “NO WAKE” ZONES TO PREVENT SPEED AND WAKE CAUSED BY FISHING
TOURNAMENTS
POST AND ENFORCE “NO WAKE” ZONES

ISSUE 8. HABITAT RESTORATION/MANAGEMENT

SUPPORT HABITAT RESTORATION EFFORTS
CONTROL INVASIVE SPECIES
REMOVE TREE SAPLINGS (WILLOWS) ON ISLANDS

ISSUE 9. LOST MOUND UNIT

NEED TO POST CLOSED AREAS BETTER, ESPECIALLY BRICKHOUSE SLOUGH

Table 5

Oppose all canoe trails, electric motor areas/motor-less areas
no designated areas at all/feel we're discriminating against fisherman/hunters
Create no wake zones instead

Make convenient stations to take care of dumping waste

Recommend keeping State intoxication levels in place/no refuge regulations

Oppose 25 shot limit/believe it will cause more crippling/oppose because of bag limit

In favor of boat ramp fee if used for upkeep/improvement of ramp

Against the elimination of permanent blinds

Against the adoption of more closed areas

In favor of temporary blinds and shoreline hunting

Agree with eliminating Blandings Landing managed hunt

Agree with SUP for fishing tournaments

No restrictions on camping

Against the definitions of camping

Create more beaches and develop a maintenance plan/opposed to closing any beaches

Opposed to all beach user fees

In favor of 5.3/should be enforced

Table 6

5.3 Slow no wake zone

Within 150 feet of big slough, start enforcing this regulation this will always be a problem area due to the location.

Spring Lake proposed speed is too slow it needs to be 40 mph to stay on plane.

4.2 Waterfowl Hunting in Closed areas

5.2 Electric Motor Areas

Steamboat Slough is not a good choice for a proposed canoe trail due to current use of skiing etc.. This is a strategic location to get off the main channel for pleasure boating.

All proposed electric motor area would impact the way the areas are used for fishing and hunting.

5.1 Beach – related Users

Close high use beaches down at sunset Friday and Saturday nights.

Create alcohol free beaches.

Maintain refuge wide camping.

Packing out human waste is too restrictive. We need another way to lower the impact of human waste. Educate the river users.

Table 7

Commercial Fisherman Special Use Permits

-Is there a cost for the special use permit for commercial fisherman special use permit? If not now will there be one in the future. When the state already has commercial fisherman special use permits? Seems like a way to get foot in the door to charge in the future.

4.2 Waterfowl Hunting Closed Areas

-Concern is that too many good closed areas with the way the weather would make the ducks hold up and not move with the assumptions that the area picked are good areas.. If one are is closed open another are up. In two or three years open discussion up to see if the area should be kept a closed area. Continually monitor areas.

-Pleasant Creek more area should be opened up like the 536 acres proposed area.

-Leave closed area no fishing/no motors area.

4.3 Waterfowl Hunting Regulations

-We don't feel that 25 shot limit would stop sky buster, monitoring the limit would be hard.

-200 yards should be spacing requirement between hunting parties not 100

4.5 Permanent Waterfowl Hunting Regulations

-Permanent blinds should be kept for safety reasons for example people racing out early in the morning. They also provide habitat for fish and geese nests.

-1st in August you stake your blinds.

-Keep open draw areas open to public.

-Since we already have local state regulation, why is there a need for federal regulations.

4.6 Potter's Marsh Managed Hunt, Pool 13

-Potter's Marsh should be kept the way it always been, for safety reasons because of shot gun starts.

--For example the problems that Green Island has had

4.7 Blanding Landing Managed Hunt

--Blanding Landing Managed Hunt should also be kept the way it is, for safety reason again.

4.8 Fishing Tournaments

--- Leave it the states alone to mandate the tournaments.

-- Restrict the number of tournaments on the refuge, limit the speed of the boats

5.1 Beach-related Uses

----There should be no restriction to camping on the refuge.

----People should take out what they bring in whether it is human waste or other waste.

----Enforce the alcohol laws you already no new ones.

----No fees for camping or other beaches

5.2 Electric Motor Areas

----If the area cuts off areas to fish and hunting there needs to be a corridor threw the area with a no wake are

-----Is this the end of the proposed areas or will they be adding more in the years to come?

5.3 Slow, No Wake Zones

----Areas that want to be no wake area should be posted and enforced

-----boats should only go 5 mph

---No overall speed limit in spring lake, because when the water is low you will need to go faster

---Unless a channel was dredge out then a 20 mph limit.

6.2 Public Access Facilities

----Against more fees.

Dogs

Do residents who live on the river need to have dogs on a leash?

Canoe Trails

Why do we need to have canoe trails and have them signed why they can go anywhere they want.

Table 8

Enforcement of current regs not being done. How will USFWS enforce new and more regulations.

Want to see old ones enforced first.

Example: regulations and enforcement of upper part of Miss. river pool 1@2

Recreation:

Camping- oppose to restricted to main channel. Like to see camping everywhere.

Why- danger drowning, space availability, seclusion,

Spring Lake speed Limit: 20 mph to slow, like to see 30mph to keep boat on up on plane.

Ramp fees: want to see where the money is going to be spent if fees are assessed.

Improve ramps if fees are assessed, other wise do not want to see fees.

Big Slough no wake Zone: agree there needs to be a slow no wake zone, for safety reasons.

25 shot limit: opposed believe it will cause downed cripples to get away for fear of wasting shells. Ill state regs allow more than 25 birds daily limit.

100 yard limit- want 200 yard limit minimum.

Permanent blinds- want to keep permanent blinds on pool 12-14

Geese benefit from goose nesting with high water.

Want to see shoreline hunting allowed in the state of Ill.

Want to be able to secure blind sites for boat blinds just as a permanent blind secures that spot.

Want to see no change to Commercial fishing regs, fish move, market demands change, water levels changes fish location. Restrict lively hood of fishermen.

Blanding Landing manage hunt- have a managed hunt with permanent blinds they way the current regs are for Pools 12-13.

Fishing tournaments: want to see regulations!!!! observed dead fish, inconsiderate to other recreational users, dangerous to other boaters, and destroy commercial fishing equipment.

Electric motors- no electric motors areas , but want to see those designated areas as no wake.

Table 9

Give the public more information on the history used to make these decisions.

Attended meeting for more general information to make comment about their concerns before public comment period ends.

4.2

Why use Beaver Island as another closed area.

There is a strong heritage of using blinds for teaching hunting to kids and blinds are needed for the safety they provide.

If you eliminate the tag system of controlling where blinds go you will create a unsafe and potentially dangerous situation

The reduction 100 yards between hunters has historically created unsafe hunting conditions leave it at 200 yards

Shell limit to 25 compared to a mix bag limit of 30 harvestable waterfowl reduces the opportunity to have a full legal hunt. Therefore there should not be a limit of the number of shells.

5.1

Beach related issues

Why is there a fee. If there is a user fee you must return that money to manage the resource you are taxing

Why only approve main channel camping when backwater camping has historically been approved and is safer.

An alternative is enforcing state and local and federal laws also inspecting camp sites for compliance with alcohol / portably waste management facilities no additional regulations required.

Deal with problems when they occur not regulate the majority because of a few bad eggs.

4.1, 5.2, 5.3

All agree on enforcing the Big Slough speed limits

The 20 mph in Spring Lake is too slow. It will cause the boats front to be up higher in the water reducing visibility and creating larger wakes.

An alternative would be a 30 mph speed limit because you can come up on plane and keep your prop from disturbing the bottom.

Alternative would be to define and mark path where you can come on plane

Few people have speed odometers

Post eagle nest area as a no wake zone.

There is no viable reason for the electric motor only areas because no wake regulations require you to be responsible for your wake.

There should be no additional permits/fees needed for commercial fishing. The system is already heavily regulated.

Do not allow small tournament fishing (15 boats or less) without permits. All multi-boat fishing groups should be issued.

Need more outreach; try an informational hot line to get simple questions answered in simple terms

FWS needs to improve getting the general public involved in decisions on dredging areas to produce more channels for boat travel, fishing and waterfowl habitat

Need to return sport tax money to the river.

Table 10

Why are we messing with what doesn't seem to be broke?

4.5 Permanent Waterfowl Blinds.

Leave as is . No changes but enforce existing regulations.

4.3 Waterfowl Hunting Regulations

100 yds is too close. 200 yds seems sufficient for safety reasons.

No limit is necessary on shot shells.

4.2 Waterfowl Hunting closed Areas

Don't close any more closed areas, instead open some more up.

4.9 Fishing Tournaments

Your state fishing license should be sufficient for any fishing you wish to do on the refuge. No fishing tournament permits should be required.

5.1 Beach Related Uses

No changes to current regulations. Enforce the laws and there won't be any problem.

Encourage the adopt an Island program.

No user fee!

Work with the COE to rip-rap the islands to reduce erosion and put more spoil on the islands to raise the islands and create more beaches. Plant mast trees as well.

5.2 Electric Motor Areas

No electric motor areas needed.

5.3 Slow, No Wake Zones

No opposition to slow or no wake zones

Establish "No Wake Zones" in tributaries (i.e Plum, Apple and Maquoketa Rivers)

6.2 Public Access Areas

No fees.